NEW BOOKS.

A Song From Germany.

Hermann Sudermann's story of "The Song of Songs," translated by Thomas Seltzer (B. W. Huebsch, publisher), relates the experience of Lilly Czepanek, a young woman who after a period of innocence that was a good deal tempted gave herself up to the "temperament" that came to possess her. Lilly's father, a music teacher and a handsome man, whose wife adored him and anointed his dark artist's curls daily with French oils and bay rum, ran away from his family while Lilly was still a child. Mrs. Czepanek, who was not an attractive lady, was unalterable in her belief that he would come back, but he never did. It is related at page 12 that Mr. Czepanek in the view of some of his friends, bore "the hallmark of creative restlessness on his thunder headed brow." Of course it was idle to think that a man so marked would ever consent to remain stationary. After some time of vain hope Mrs. Czepanek went mad and attacked her daughter with a bread knife. She was put in an asylum and Lilly, in the words of the story, "was left alone in the world."

As a matter of fact she was not left alone. The story speaks of her beauty. It says: "Whoever saw her come down the street with the easy swing of her beautifully curved hips, with the careless, rythmic tread of exuberant youth and strength, with the mobile head, too small for her tall body, set on a long neck, with the two mouse teeth that looked out eagerly from behind an upper lip somewhat too short and with the two famous 'Lilly eyes'—he who saw her did not think of the shabbiness of her dress, did not suspect that this delicately shaped, broad breast was bent for hours over sewing; that this whole, glorious, youthful organism, whose sap as it chased through her veins manifested itself in causeless blushings and passionate palings, was grandly maintained and preserved on boiled potatoes, bread spread with clarified fat and bad sausage." She came to think very well of Lieut. von Prell, a merry wag with pale eyelashes and freckles, but it was the redoubtable Col. von Mertzbach who bore her off and actually married her.

The story goes on in realistic detail. The Colonel was a gross person. The author does not hesitate to prove it, nor does he stint the evidence. Lilly was sent flying by this violent son of Mars when he discovered that she was unfaithful. So was the pale winkered and freckled Von Prell. His flight was one way, hers another. The story follows Lilly. She had further experience. She was an artist's model at one time. She married again and pretty well at last. We must say that we were not greatly exhilarated by her company or startled by her adventures and that we were not sorry to take leave of her.

An Experience in Death.

Mr. Arnold Bennett's story of "The Glimpse" (D. Appleton and Company) begins curiously. We read of a concert in London. A pianist with a pointed beard played a new French work of genius called "Night Moths." An old man in the audience shrugged his shoulders. A moment later he made a scornful sound through his nose. Presently he muttered: "Morbid!" After that he exclaimed in a loud tone: "Ridiculous!" As the night moths fluttered to rest amid timid applause he seized his hat and strode out snorting with anger.

But Morrice Loring, who purports to tell the story, records that although he had heard music as beautiful he had "never heard music in which the twelve unchangeable semi-tones of the octave—sole material of all our music—were so tenderly, so harshly, so cruelly, so brilliantly teased, cajoled and whipped into the subtle curves of an exceedingly complex temperament." He wondered how the French composer had managed to write it down. He "exulted in the acute distinction, the aristocratic audacity, the baffling obscurity of this ruthless and soft music." He thought "how fine and glorious it was to hear these sounds now for the first time heard in London," and he felt like crying angrily to the audience to shout. He wished them to show their understanding of the fact that "the immortal spirit of beauty had passed into another incarnation," and to do it with appropriate vehemence. The audience of course neglected to do anything of the kind. It pattered politely with its gloves. It was really more irritating than the spirited old man who had gone out snorting his displeasure.

There is a chapter about the stolidity of the audience. Morrice Loring records that his lips "curled savagely," and again that they "curled with the intensity of disgust." He preferred the nasal trumpeting of the old man to this apathy. In the chapter following we read of the singing of a young American woman who was advertised as a pupil of Jean de Reszke. She "seemed to be a highly finished article," but as Morrice listened to her his thought dwelt merely on the ten thousand hours her voice must have run up and down the scale, to the exasperation of people in the flats above and below. She was an entirely self-possessed young woman. At the conclusion of her endeavors she went off in a magnificent automobile. The next chapter is an account of Bond street, and a well written and interesting chapter it is.

At the end of the fifth chapter, which has carried us into Hyde Park, we come to some explanation of Morrice and of the chapters preceding. He was 42, famous as the author of the three large volumes entitled "The Development of European Music," and the beneficiary of a fortune of $300,000 left by a half brother who died in distant Indianapolis. He tells us: "I had the consciousness of immense and successful endeavor, of being unsurpassed in my sphere; I had fame; I had wealth. I had, above all, my senses exquisitely trained to the perception of beauty." But he was not happy. The first chapters, as we now understand, are a demonstration that he was not. He had a malady. He tells what it was. He says: "My malady was the celebrated malady of existence."

A fascinating chapter tells how Morrice fell in love and married ten years before. Alas! the roses of that time did not endure. The still young and beautiful Inez was not prepared to share and did not like her husband's melancholy, consequent upon being alive. She might have eloped with Capt. Hulse, the artist, a gentleman who overflowed with a cheerful vivacity, if Morrice had not been taken with a seizure of angina pectoris on discovering the plan.

The experience of Morrice at this point constitutes the remarkable part of the story. It may not be quite accurate, but we must think it fairly reasonable to say that he died. He stood at the window of his study in the handsome London flat that he inhabited and looked into the bedroom. He saw himself lying on the bed. His wife Inez entered the bedroom. "She had in one hand a handkerchief folded crosswise like a muffler, and in the other two coins. She approached that body and put her ear to its breast and listened intently. * * * She passed the handkerchief under that fallen jaw and so lifted the jaw and tied the handkerchief in a knot at the top of the head of that body. And with her delicate fingers Inez drew down the eyelids of that body and put a penny on one and half-a-crown on the other. And she straightened the arms of that body. She seemed to be acquainted with these singular rites much better than I was."

That is the merest bit from a detail that goes on to be remarkable. The disembodied Morrice passed through infinite space and time. At one point he records: "It was the birth of matter that I had been watching. The curve of evolution shot still more boldly upward." And again: "With a sigh of supreme transport I began to yield up my melting individuality in exchange for the final self knowledge in which resides the clue to the enigma. I throbbed to the prime pulsations of timeless existence. I saw. I became. The pulsations resolved themselves with mysterious and formidable portent into the vast reiterated summoning of a titanic gong that announced the unimagined."

Back he went over the course that he had accomplished. He resisted, but quite vainly. Back through all the space and the millions of years. He sighted the Albert Memorial, which he abhorred; before he died he had always gone a roundabout way in order to avoid it. The clock finished striking eleven. The penny and the half crown rolled upon the floor as he opened his eyes. Inez came from the bath room. "Her lips were extraordinarily swollen, and vermilion red even to rawness." Poor soul! Her contrition had taken tragical form. She had drunk oxalic acid.

The doctor came. He attended to Inez first. Her case was worse than her husband's. But he said grimly to Morrice after a while: "Let me tell you you've had a darned near shave, my friend!" Upon this Morrice comments. He says: "A darned near shave! For him my adventure was to be summed up as a darned near shave. All those wonders, miracles, ecstasies, revealings, terrors—unique and unutterable—were a darned near shave. I had seen the infinite, I had travelled through millions of years and come back through millions of years, I had had knowledge of myself, I was made sacred to myself and set apart, every human being was made sacred to me and set apart—and it was a darned near shave!"

It was more than that for the unfortunate Inez. A strange story, striking in its imagination, grim enough in places, its humor bold and grim. It is not likely that all of Morrice's adventure will be quite clear to the reader, but we believe that he will wonder and admire.

The Author of "The Wide, Wide World."

The ordinary rules of criticism cannot be applied to "The Life and Letters of Susan Warner, 'Elizabeth Wetherell,'" by her sister, Anne B. Warner (G. P. Putnam's Sons). It is the attempt of a devoted sister to leave a record of one she loved and admired, a picture of character and personality rather than of events. If at times the revelations seem too intimate to be told, it should be remembered that the writer has seen nearly every one she speaks of pass away.

By far the greater part of the book is taken up with extracts from Susan Warner's own letters and diaries. They give glimpses of life in the middle of the century, of a New York society that is only a memory, of the struggle of two brave girls against troubles that seem rather obscure. It may seem provoking to have names only mentioned when Miss Warner might supply interesting comments that no one else can give now, but she is trying to show her sister as she was and has no interest in more trivial things.

Much of the book has to do with Constitution Island, the home of the Warners, which was recently presented to the Government by Miss Warner and Mrs. Russell Sage. The endeavor to retain possession of it apparently swallowed up all the profits of authorship. "The Wide, Wide World," it should be remembered, had a sale only second to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and "Queechy" was nearly as popular, while the other books of both sisters had many readers. A plainer statement of their domestic difficulties might explain why the sisters until Susan died were obliged to endure toil and privations.

There is vagueness about material things, but the letters and journals reveal Susan Warner's personal character in its simplicity, its courage and religious faith in a manner that will charm those who guessed it from her stories. It is a remarkable book in many ways.

Russell Sturgis's History.

The appearance of the second volume of "A History of Architecture," by Russell Sturgis (the Baker and Taylor Company), is unfortunately posthumous. The publishers, however, can announce that the manuscript was practically complete when it came into their hands and indicate that a third volume will appear. In this volume Dr. Sturgis begins with a sketch of the architecture of the Orient; India, China, Japan and Persia. He next describes the styles that came from the decline of ancient art, the early basilicas, the round churches, ending with the Byzantine monuments. An account of Moslem architecture follows. The last book deals with what he calls the "developed" or "later Romanesque" architecture wherever it occurs in Europe.

As in the previous volume, the illustrations and plans are numerous; they are helped out with many beautiful photogravures of celebrated buildings.

English Drinks and Taverns.

It is an attractive title that Mr. Frederick W. Hackwood has chosen for his essays, "Inns, Ales and Drinking Customs of Old England" (Sturgis and Walton Company). He tells us that ale came into England with the Danes; he dallies with doubtful etymologies, to which he gives little credit himself; he tells some well known facts about Burton and quotes bits from old records about beer and ale. Later he explains how the drinking of spirits coincides with the Puritan Revolution and how the licensing system was introduced.

He has a good deal to say about historic inns, queer signs and mottoes; he has a chapter on drinking songs, one on inns in fiction and in literature, something about coffee houses—scores of interesting subjects. The pictures are good and represent famous places.

Books for the Young.

Though written for youth, Mr. Harry Delacombe's "The Boys' Book of Airships" (Frederick A. Stokes Company) may be read with profit by all who are interested in the conquest of the air. It is a popular account of all that has been attempted in aerial navigation from the beginning through last summer. The author has attained great clearness by a sensible arrangement of his matter. In the first part of his book he tells about balloons and covers the historical part of the subject down to very recent times; he next takes up the dirigible balloons, relating the experiments of each nation separately; finally he treats of the heavier than air machines and of the great contemporary advance in them, explaining the differences between the various types. This is all put in language as little technical as possible, which makes the book desirable for the great number of persons whose knowledge of mechanics is limited, as well as for boys.

The story of an entertaining and strictly virtuous street urchin is told by Mr. Arthur E. McFarlane in "Redney McGow" (Little, Brown and Company). He travels with a circus and meets with exciting adventures; it is the right kind of a circus, for all the performers in it are good and it has a philanthropic manager. The excellent moral lessons inculcated are mitigated by plentiful slang. They encourage manliness and self-reliance even if they add to the glamour of the circus.

An author who will invest with romance the Hackensack meadows as Mr. Thomas Townsend does in "The Home Afloat or The Boy Trappers of the Hackensack" (Athenia Publishing Company, Athenia, N. J.) may be forgiven for some lack of literary skill. Apart from the extraordinary financial and sporting success of the heroes the book is extremely realistic. The author is particular about the exactness of the topography and minute description of persons and objects. He covers the whole field of sport on the Hackensack forty years ago, fishing, trapping muskrats, shooting wild fowl, skating, ice boating, and includes various agricultural exploits. The idea of floating up and down that placid stream in a sort of houseboat is attractive; so is the highly accomplished negro who instructs the young people. The hero is very good and uniformly prosperous.

To the variety of fictitious claims Mr. Edward Stratemeyer adds another in "First at the North Pole" (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company, Boston). He seems to have begun with a story of Maine country life with a possible quest for a long lost father, when he suddenly made up his mind to take his two young heroes to the pole. The first half of his book is entertaining; the last half is too short to permit the proper dilution of miscellaneous information about Arctic discovery. The effort for sensation is evident, but the author can interest neither his readers nor himself in the polar journey.

The young persons who in a previous book by James Oliver Curwood went through exciting adventures in the Canadian backwoods meet with more of these in "The Gold Hunters" (the Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis). The chief exploit is navigating the rapids and falls of a dangerous river while dodging and pursuing a mad hunter. There is much sensation, much attractive description of wood life, an Indian of great attainments and a rather sudden stop in order to make room for a sequel.

In another sequel, "The Auto Boys' Outing," by James E. Braden (the Saalfield Publishing Company, Akron, Ohio), the set of boys disentangle an exciting mystery and bring a villain to punishment in addition to having all the pleasure their automobile affords.

Some Fiction.

The commonplace theme of the British nobleman hunting for an American fortune is treated ingeniously and amusingly through a good part of "Lord Loveland Discovers America," by C. N. and A. M. Williamson (Doubleday, Page and Company). The several steps by which the conceited young Britisher cuts himself off from his past life and all ordinary means of assistance are natural, and he excites sympathy and amusement when he finds himself face to face with the realities in New York, with neither money nor friends. He falls into the bread line and serves in an East Side restaurant. With his joining a strolling company of actors and turning chauffeur his experiences become less original and the interest lags, but the impetus of the entertaining first half of the book will carry the reader to the end, when everything turns out for the best, as it should.

Though the beginning with the hero's early youth might indicate that it was meant for a juvenile, the interest of Mr. Herbert Strang's "Humphrey Bold" (the Bobbs-Merrill Company) is that of the usual historical romance. It is pleasantly told and holds the attention, even if the incidents lack originality. As is customary in tales of eighteenth century England there are a lost will, an oppressed heir, highwaymen, kidnappers, a press gang and much fighting. The prevalent fashion in fiction may account for the hero's skilful use of his fists. He leads a lot of prisoners out of St. Malo under Duguay-Trouin's nose, serves under Benbow and describes the Admiral's last fight and the disgrace of his captains. There is lovemaking and humor and plenty of excitement.

Other Books.

An entertaining and readable account of a social experiment that is working satisfactorily in many places is given by Mr. William R. George in "The Junior Republic." He tells how the system of letting young people learn to govern themselves grew out of his attempt, about twenty years ago, to give city street children an outing in the country without their becoming nuisances to the farmers. The story of how the organization developed will interest the reader in the account of its complex working in the places where it operates successfully and may lead him to share somewhat the author's enthusiasm and expectations of the future. The author disclaims all responsibility for having his name attached to the organization.

The excellent little compendium of forestry organization throughout the world made by Prof. Bernard E. Fernow, LL. D., when he was a professor at Cornell University a few years ago under the title "A Brief History of Forestry," is republished by the University Press of Toronto, where he is now dean of the forestry school, with additional chapters on the United States and Canada. There is a certain lack of proportion in the space devoted to different countries, due in part to the fact that information is much more abundant in some than in others and in part to the degree of care given to forests by each country. Thus the account for Germany, where the science is most highly developed, is far the most complete.

The excellent Baedeker "Handbooks" are kept as close to date as the demand calls for, and some have become almost annuals. The guide to "Northern Germany" appears in the fifteenth English, equivalent to the twenty-ninth German, edition (Karl Baedeker, Leipzig; Charles Scribner's Sons).

The degree of specalization to which the law is carried nowadays may be marked by the appearance of a treatise of nearly 600 pages on "Shippers and Carriers of Interstate Freight" by Mr. Edgar Watkins of Atlanta (T. B. Flood and Company, Chicago). As the author remarks in his preface: "The widening scope of interstate commerce makes it necessary that all practitioners shall be ready to advise clients as to the rights and liabilities growing out of the law relating to transportation of this commerce." In the present rather chaotic condition of the law, with important decisions pending, a treatise like this must be of somewhat ephemeral importance. It is of value, however, as a clue through the tangle, for it has gathered together all the laws on the subject, records the decisions already given and tries to deduce the principles on which they rest. It is a brave piece of pioneer work.

The publications of the Buffalo Historical Society are becoming a repository of information regarding canals. It has just issued a volume entitled "Canal Enlargement in New York State." This contains papers on many subjects, reminiscences of early work on the Erie Canal, a sketch of the Buffalo Board of Trade and its successors, some personal notices and ten papers relating to canal enlargement and the barge canal campaign.

Books Received.

"A Siennese Painter of the Franciscan Legend." Bernard Berenson. (John Lane Company.)

"Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale." A. M. Broadley. (John Lane Company.)

"César Franck." Vincent d'Indy. (John Lane Company.)

"The Life and Memoirs of Comte Regis de Frobriand." Marie Caroline Post. (E. P. Dutton and Company.)

"Romanticism and the Romantic School in Germany." Robert M. Wernaer. (Appletons.)

"A Central Bank." Robert Emmett Ireton. (Anthony Stumpf Publishing Company, New York.)

"Natural Salvation." Charles Asbury Stephens, M. D. (The Laboratory, Norway Lake, Me.)

"Wanderings Among South Sea Savages." H. Wilfrid Walker. (Witherby and Company; Charles Scribner's Sons.)

"Successful Commerce." (N. W. Ayer and Son, Philadelphia.)

"The Christian Pastor." Albert Josiah Lyman. (Thomas Y. Crowell and Company.)

"Anti-Pragmatism." Albert Schinz, Ph. D. (Small, Maynard and Company, Boston.)

"Tag." Valance Patriarche. (L. C. Page and Company, Boston.)

"The Bright Side." Charles R. Skinner, LL. D. (Frank D. Beattys and Company, New York.)

"The Airship Almanac." Lewis Allen. (John W. Luce and Company, Boston.)

"On the Branch." Pierre de Coulevain. (E. P. Dutton and Company.)

"With Walker in Nicaragua." James Carson Jamison. (E. W. Stephens Publishing Company, Columbia, Mo.)

"Flower and Thorn." Lloyd Mifflin. (Henry Frowde, New York.)

"The Dominion of New Zealand." Sir Arthur P. Douglas, Bart. (Little, Brown and Company.)

"A Manual of Common School Law." C. W. Bardeen. (C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, N. Y.)

"The Seminoles of Florida." Minnie Moore-Willson. (Moffat, Yard and Company.)

"American Beer." (United States Brewers Association, New York.)